



Understanding an Official Community Plan (OCP)

Inside

What is an Official Community Plan? Why is it important?

The OCP is a bylaw, prepared and adopted by District Council in compliance with the Provincial Local Government Act. It is a long-range policy plan that guides the District's decision-making related to land use as well as other community interests such as housing and infrastructure. All district decisions must be made in alignment with the Official Community Plan.

How does an OCP work with other planning documents?

The OCP is the umbrella policy document for the District of Sooke, and is implemented by all departments. It provides the overarching strategic direction for District Council and staff, who consider and apply OCP vision and policies to a wide range of municipal decisions such as budgeting, servicing, capital projects, and in the review of land use and development proposals. The OCP is not intended to provide highly detailed policies on topics that are already covered in the District's other Master Plans and regulations. Rather, the OCP builds upon and supersedes those plans and tools.

WHAT IS AN OCP?

HOW THE OCP WORKS WITH OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

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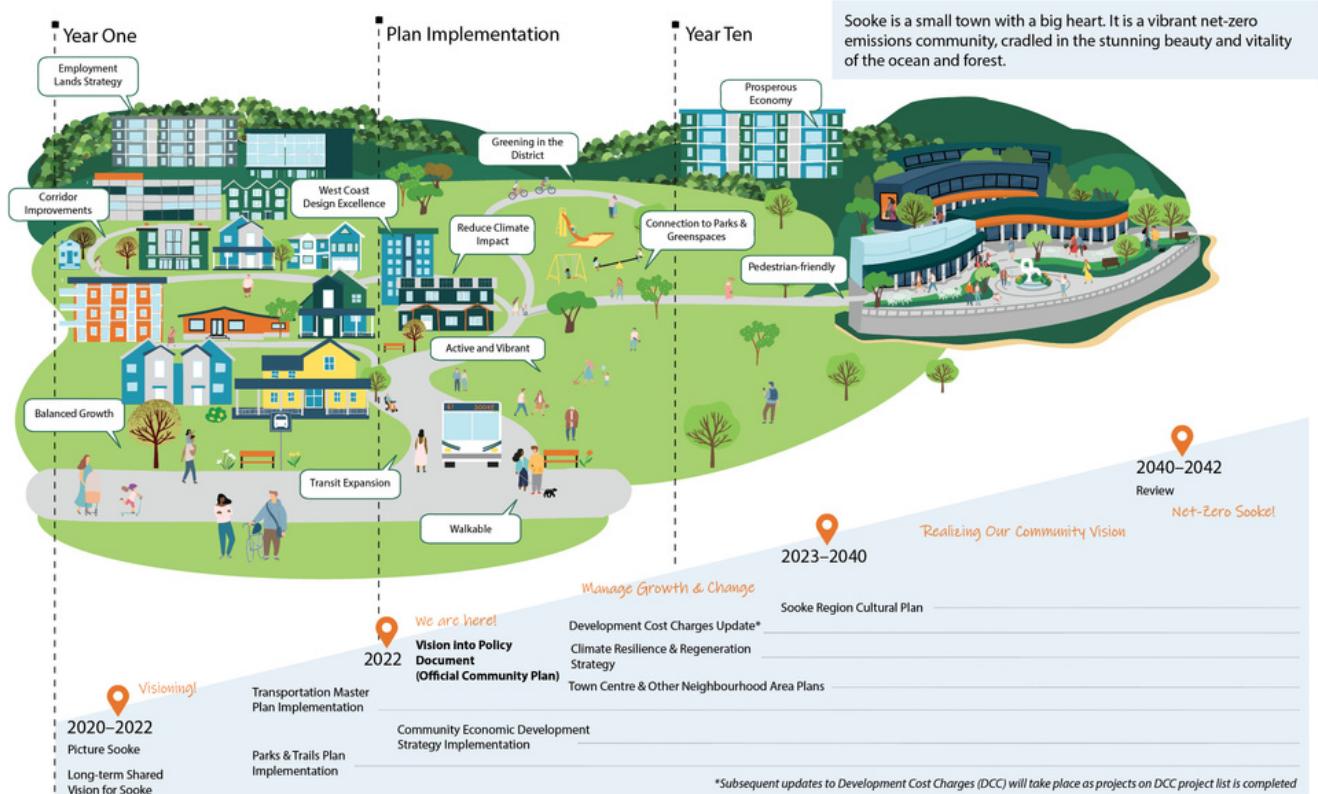
Visit www.sooke.ca to subscribe to the District's mailing lists:

- receive monthly newsletters
- public participation opportunities
- public meeting agendas
- and more.





How Plans Work Together



Key Planning Terms

Amenities: Community amenities improve the livability of an area and include parks, libraries, community or recreation centres, streetscape improvements, greenways, or space for community-serving groups.

Density: is a measurement of development intensity on a lot. Density can be measured by dwelling units per hectare (single-family), or by floor area ratio (FAR) which relates to the amount of building floorspace to the area of the property.

Development Cost Charges (DCC): DCCs are fees on all new development paid either per housing unit or per square metre of new development. DCC rates are set district-wide by Council, and Provincial legislation controls what DCCs can be spent on. Currently, DCCs can be mainly spent on arterial streets, water and sewer utilities, new parks, greenways and storm drainage infrastructure.

Development Permit: A Development Permit is a type of application that most often controls the form and character of a proposed new building and ensures it meets the standards and requirements of the particular zone. Other types of development permits protect the environment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and consider hazardous site conditions.

Floor Area Ratio: relates to the amount of building floorspace to the area of the property.

The same amount of floor area can be accommodated in many building forms. It works together with maximum heights, setbacks and maximum lot coverage. FAR is the ratio of a build's total floor area to the area of land that it is constructed on.

- **FAR of 0.5:** the building, if constructed as a single-storey, covers 50% of available land.
- **FAR of 1.0:** the building, if constructed as a single-storey, covers 100% of available land.
- **FAR of 1.5:** the building, if constructed as a single-storey, covers 100% of available land with a portion of construction occurring on a second storey OR a 3-storey build covering half of the available land.
- **FAR of 2.0:** the build, if constructed, as a two-storey, covers 100% of available land OR a 4-storey build covering half of the available land.

Did you know the Development Application Tracker at www.sooke.ca shares information about active development applications received by the district?

Key Planning Terms

Land Use Designations: are a classification that determines the type of future use a property can have (i.e. commercial, single-family housing, multi-family housing, etc.). Each OCP Land Use Designation has a number of associated zones that can be applied through rezoning.

Mixed Use: A development that allows more than one type of land use within one building, for example, a combination of residential, commercial, office or institutional use.

Neighbourhood Plan: is the most detailed type of land use plan within the District's OCP and details specific housing types, density, environmentally-sensitive areas, cycling and pedestrian networks, and design guidelines for a particular neighbourhood. They establish a common vision through close consultation with the community. Sooke's draft OCP proposes neighbourhood plans be developed for the Kaltasin/Billings Spit and Whiffin Spit neighbourhoods.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) Diagram



The form density takes involves trade-offs. While some people may prefer lower building heights, others would prefer to have more greenspace and public amenities combined with slightly taller building heights. The draft OCP directs FAR and prescribes greater density in the town core areas.

Rezoning: The process of changing the existing zone on a property to another zone. This is a regular part of the development process that occurs when an applicant applies to change the zone of a property. The zones that the applicant can choose to rezone to are determined by the land use designation (set out in the OCP). The rezoning process amends the District's Zoning Bylaw and requires public notification to nearby property owners, a Public Hearing and approval by District Council

Riparian Areas: these areas are vegetated spaces adjacent to a creek or any watercourse that help to maintain water quality and fish habitat.

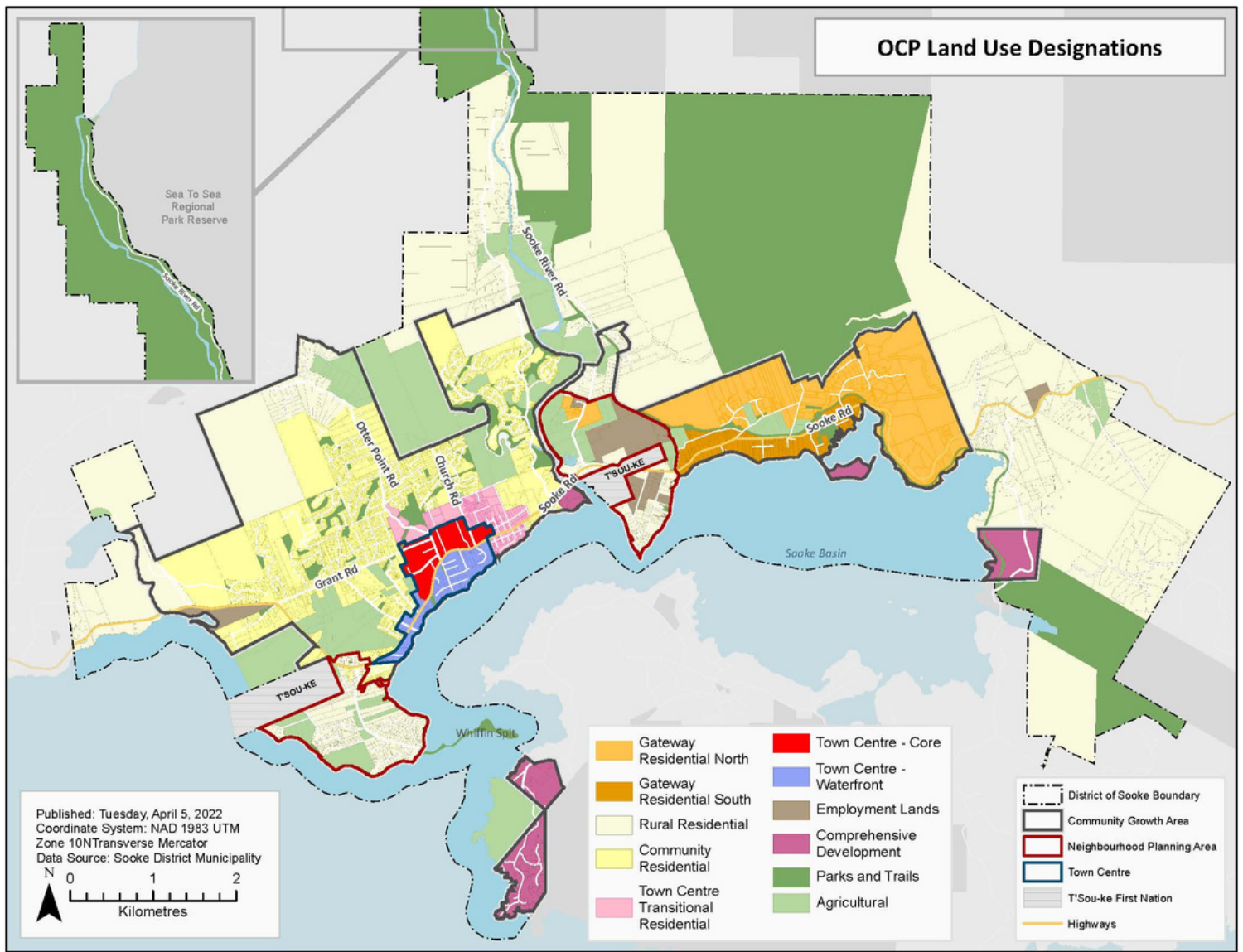
Streetscape: is the overall character and appearance of a street formed by elements and features that frame the public street such as building frontages and setbacks from the street, street trees and plants, street lighting, benches, width of the sidewalk, etc.

Subdivision: is the process of changing the legal size or shape of a piece of land called a Lot. Subdivision includes both dividing a Lot into two or more smaller parcels or consolidating a number of smaller parcels into a new larger Lot.

Zone: The zone on a property specifies permitted uses, the dimensional requirements for lots, the height of buildings and how far they can be setback from a property boundary. The zone also determines the maximum density of buildings on a property and can be measured in the District's zones as a Floor Area Ratio (FAR). All land in the District is assigned a zone under the District's Zoning Bylaw. The type of zone that can be applied to a property is set by the land use designation in the District's OCP.

Zoning Bylaw: This bylaw regulates the present use of land. Zoning is a tool to implement the District's policies and land use designations as set out in the OCP.

Visit www.sooke.ca to use the land use map. Apply filters to view the zoning of particular areas



Project Timeline



To participate in the public hearing, you can:

1. Provide a written submission before 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27th.

- a. **Email** – send your submission to Corporate Services at corp@sooke.ca.
- b. **Mail** – address your submission to Corporate Services, Municipal Hall, 2205 Otter Point Road, Sooke BC V9Z 1J2.
- c. **In-person** – place your submission, addressed to Corporate Services, in the drop-box located at the main entrance of Municipal Hall at any time before the submission deadline or delivered to reception during office hours, Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

2. Address Council during the hearing, in person.

- a. The Hearing will take place in Council Chambers at District of Sooke Municipal Hall starting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27, 2022. An overflow space is available, if needed, in the adjacent Fire Services Lounge.
- b. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. for those wishing to attend the Public Hearing. Persons wishing to speak, may sign up on arrival and throughout the Hearing.
- c. While speakers are not restricted to speaking duration, (speaker) limitations to assist with equity and fairness of all who wish to speak and avoid redundancy may be made at the call of the Chair.